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MEMORIAL SERMON,

PREACHED ON THE

NATIONAL FUNERAL DAY

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OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

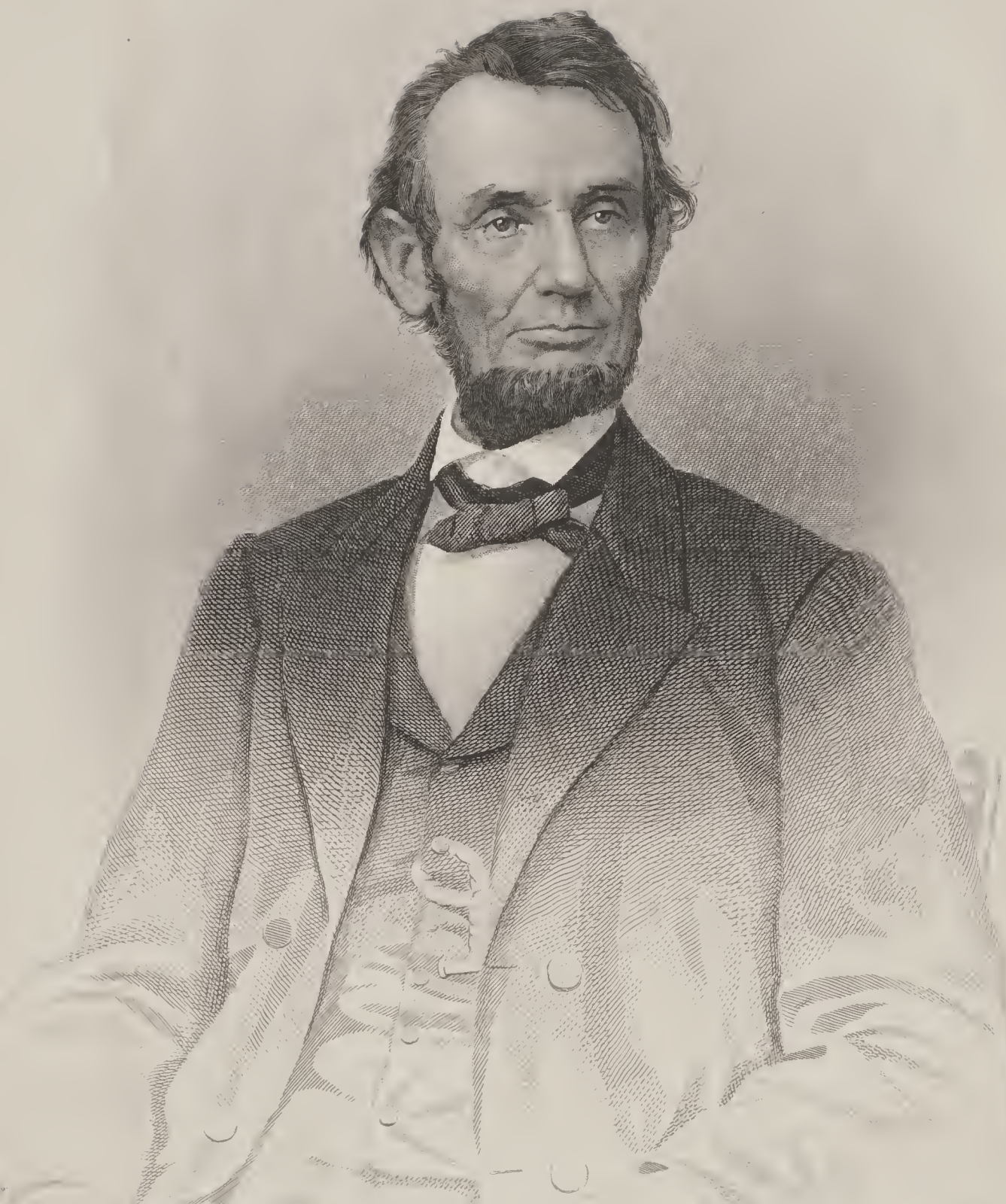
WEDNESDAY NOON, APRIL 19, 1865,

AT UNION CHAPEL, CINCINNATI.

By ALEXANDER CLARK, Pastor.

CINCINNATI:

MASONIC REVIEW OFFICE, 178 VINE STREET.



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TO THE READER.

THE following diseourse was delivered to an audienee whieh crowded Union Chapel to its utmost eapaeity, filling aisles, galleries and vestibule, at the hour of noon, on Wednesday. And thus were ehurches throughout the city and country filled to overflowing, an ever memorable testimony to the profound and universal sorrow of the people.

In front of the pulpit, on a pedestal festooned in blaek, was a snow-white bust of ABRAHAM LINCOLN; and by its side a full length statue, personifying Faith, embraeing with her left arm the eross, and suspending with her right hand a wreath of *immortelles* above the President's brow. The platform was draped in mourning, the sable folds radiating from the desk to the altar railing around the statue. The solemnity of the seene, intensified by the plaintive tones of the organ, moved many in the eongregation to tears.

The aeeompanying portrait is engraved from a photograph taken one year before Mr. Lincoln's death, and was kindly furnished for this use by Messrs. Moore, Wilstaeh & Baldwin, Cincinnati, publishers of a very interesting Biography of our lamented President. The engraving is eopyrighted.

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CITY OF WASHINGTON.

A SERMON.

"And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah." 1 SAM. XXV. 1.

I have some where read a fable of a tree, which, as it fell groaning to the earth, discovered that out of its own timber the woodman had hafted the ax which entered its heart, and felled it to the ground; and another of an "eagle, that, pierced by an arrow as it soared in the skies, discerned, while it lay dying on the earth, that its own wing had furnished a feather to the shaft that drank up its blood."

The great man whom the nation mourns to-day, so honest, so pure, so unsuspecting,—by his very magnanimity, by permitting all around him to enjoy the broad liberties he shared himself, by the lofty nobility of walking and talking among men as one of a common brotherhood—unconsciously exposed his life to the red hand of an assassin, little dreaming that such a fiendish agency should ever press its stealthy foot on the soil of our Republic. By his love for the lives and liberties of others, he lost his own. In his day of crucifixion, his heart's language to bitterest enemies was, "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do." As of old, when treason, plotted into conspiracy, thrust a spear into the side of the defenseless, but merciful and delivering Christ; so again, in the crisis

of political rebellion, have traitors slain their only hope!

A free people's leader has fallen; our country's chosen ruler lies bullet-pierced and cold in his coffin. One short week ago, happy and hopeful, standing in smiles among his people, giving us cheer, leading us on and up to the Pisgah summit of promise; to-day, sightless, pulseless, and silent, shrouded in his inaugural suit of black, and a weeping nation bending over his bier! Never did mortal man, going to his long home, have such a multitude of mourners in his funeral train.

A year ago I was honored, in company with my friend, Rev. E. A. Brindley, by obtaining a half hour's interview with the President in his private apartment. He spoke of his visit to the battle-ground of Gettysburg, and his feelings during the dedication ceremonies of the soldiers' cemetery there. Said he, "The prayer offered on that occasion by the Rev. Dr. Stockton, was the most impressive utterance I ever heard. My own soul was stirred that sad day at sight of the graves where so many brave boys slept. Our country is, since then, dearer to me than ever. It is worth all the blood it costs. But I can scarcely think of Gettysburg without tears. The pale preacher himself seemed like one ready for the grave."

Such words show the tender heart of our beloved Lincoln. How strange the disclosures of time! A year and a half has passed since that memorable 19th of November, and both Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Everett, the two distinguished orators of the day, are numbered

with the dead, while the frail form of the man of God who led the deep devotion there, still lives to plead in prayer the cause of liberty.

In the month of February, 1861, when the President elect left his quiet home in Springfield, Illinois, to assume the duties of his high office, it was by asking the prayers of his intimate Christian neighbors. When Willie died, his darling child, all the father of the President's heart was touched and tendered. When he witnessed the sad scene of consecrating the grave-ground at Gettysburg, his whole nature was subdued and softened into love to Jesus; and from that day he dated a newer and stronger faith. Every successive proclamation by his hand, and utterance of his tongue, show more and more the spirit of Christ. He was a Bible reader, and a man of prayer. A Presbyterian clergyman of Philadelphia, a personal friend of Mr. Lincoln, who tarried over night at the White House, a few months since, overheard the voice of the President in secret prayer as early as five o'clock in the morning, and was assured by a domestic in the family, that such was his daily practice.

Like Samuel of old, he was called out from among the people, and qualified for his office by the spirit of the Lord. He was greater than a ruler. He was nobler than a king. Like the prophet Samuel, Abraham Lincoln held a commission from heaven. He was appointed to proclaim, and establish throughout this American Republic the principles of our first De-

claration, that "all men are created free and equal, and are endowed with the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Samuel had been eminently successful in advancing all the interests of the nation of Israel, but it is evident that the people did not duly estimate his worth, until he was taken away from them by death. Then, when their leader was removed, they sincerely lamented him, and saw, at once, of what a blessing they had been deprived. All Israel were gathered together to weep over him, and to bury him in his house, or prepared tomb at Ramah, his quiet home.

In the Providence of God, the chief among all able, faithful, and honest advocates of Truth has fallen. And, like Israel over silent Samuel, our nation is assembled at this hour to lament and bury him. In the grave by his peaceful prairie home in Springfield the remains of our greatest President, our martyred Magistrate, shall now be deposited to rest until the resurrection trumpet-call!

"Champion of Freedom! man of God!
Servant of Christ, well done!
Thy path of thorns hath now been trod,
Thy red-cross crown is won!

"Champion of Freedom! on thy breast
From whence thy fervor flowed,
Thou hast obtained eternal rest,
The bosom of thy God!

Just after the battle of the Wilderness, in a hospital at Fredericksburg, there lay, upon a stretcher, a wounded soldier. He was a strong, noble-looking man,

but he was shot through the head. His eyes were closed; he knew no one; could answer no voice, and yet he still breathed. None who saw him can ever forget the expression of his pale countenance, or how that massive chest heaved up and down. Kind visitors waited at his side and watched for hours, thinking every hour would be his last. All night he lay there, motionless, save the heaving bosom. A great loyal heart was breathing there! In the morning he was no better,—but he began to move his feet. He seemed to be marching, and he marched till he died—tramp, tramp, tramp,—dead and cold, but marching on!

So to-day our brave, departed President, though dead, still keeps marching on! He lives in the hearts of the loyal millions. The spirit that ruled his life, and led him triumphantly forward through wintry darkness to April exultations, is now spread abroad throughout the land.

Our Republic has an immortal heart that can not die; an omnipotent arm that can not be conquered! Our powers, established by fathers' blood, perpetuated by our brothers' in many a red battle, and now sealed in blessed continuance to our posterity for ever by the life-blood signature of our President himself, are powers ordained of God!

Had Emperor Napoleon or Queen Victoria been assassinated, bloody revolution would have rolled as a flood upon those dominions in a day, and, doubtless, all the nations of Europe been overwhelmed in a resistless tide of war. But here we bear the stroke, and

stand up stronger as a nation in our united grief of heart! Our Government is not subject to men; but men are subject to our Government. The man of highest place and greatest honor may be stricken down, but the laws of our national being are founded in eternal truth, and are immutable and invincible. Monarchies have attacked us, and been beaten back. Conspiracies have aimed at our destruction, and been detected and held to open shame. Rebellion, mammoth and million-armed, has uprisen against us, and, though wounding us sore, has been broken, dismayed, and made to bite the very dust!

Underlying this last great struggle was a power, than which it is impossible for one to be more inveterately at war with republican institutions. That power nursed, and petted, and spoiled, and fevered under sunny skies, sought the enslavement of the whole people; it carried gags and manacles to our National Congress Halls; it built bars before our Christian pulpits; it gauged the evangelism of our religious tract societies; it dictated the utterances of voice and press throughout the land; it never affiliated with our Republic, with its high, free, starry constellation of States, but was selfishly Southern from its birth, and reserved all its sympathies for itself. The northland of the nation was despised, because untrodden by slaves. Now, a nationality with such a growth of prejudice must necessarily, in due time, be shadowed to the heart.

For four years God has been tearing out that poison

by the roots. It was deep-planted and wide-spread; it has made and unmade administrations; it has crimsoned our soil with blood, and draped the nation in mourning; its motto has ever been, "rule or ruin;" it has scattered firebrands by midnight in our chief cities; it has massacred soldiers in blue; it has starved its captive prisoners; it has held over white men as well as black, the bludgeon and the knife, and in its desperate death panic has madly murdered our good and loving President.

In the long northern winter, snows fall upon our mountains, covering from sight the withered foliage of the summer. Ice floors itself from bank to bank, across our rivers, and all nature is dreary, dumb, and chill. But spring comes at length; the ice and snow melt beneath the sun, and what was a cold burden, frozen, and fastened, and piled over the ground, softens and flows away, in refreshing floods, to the far away regions of the South, there to make the cotton bloom white as our mountain snow, and the sugar-cane fill with sweet moisture pure as our meadow dews.

So, for a long winter of war, our North people's hearts have been snowed under, our streams of sympathy over-frozen, and all our summer prosperities withered and concealed by the cold, snowy burden. But at last the April-time of peace smiled in heavenly sunlight upon us. We all rejoiced. And what had so long rested upon us, as the solid ice of resentment and vengeance toward our enemies, began to melt, and flow southward from the whole breadth of our

humanity, filling every channel with a rapidly swelling current of pardon and good will to all our vanquished enemies. And while our soul snows were melting, our cold hearts warming, the spring birds singing, the peace flowers bursting into bloom, we exulted at the thought that our animosity, all melted away, should flow to the southern heart in streams of forgiveness! We gloried in the gladness, that what had been so long a cold weight upon us, should be turned into joy in melting, and joy in flowing, and joy in reaching the weary!

But midway in its sweep, that mercy-tide is refrozen, as if a December blast from Labrador had fettered it in an icy chain of frost.

The black Saturday threw a pall upon our spirits through which the sun has ceased to penetrate. The shock is like that which rent the rocks of Calvary; and the darkness like that which blinded the sun when Christ was slain; for inasmuch as wrong is done even to the least of His little ones, it is done to Him.

There is a great Cause—the cause of Christ—the cause of Liberty, at strife with the Prince of Dark ness. The temporal and eternal interests of the Lord's poor are more precious than the lives of the devil's rich. The great masses in the South will not be free and safe, and the cause of humanity vindicated, until the chief leaders of the rebellion are punished for their unpardonable crimes. "VENGEANCE is mine, I will REPAY, saith the Lord."

The bondaged children of OUR Israel, the great masses in all the southern States, shall be led dry-shod through THIS Red Sea, though Pharaoh and his tyrant hosts be swallowed in the swirling waves! If the Almighty justly choked oppressors once, he may justly punish conspirators, traitors, and assassins again. Let us, poor tremblers, be STILL, for God moves in our midst. He needs not our aid in the administration of his judgments.

If ever a man in high position was free from pride, it was Abraham Lincoln. If there ever was a man appointed to rule, whose whole being beamed and brimmed with loving-kindness, it was Abraham Lincoln. If ever a magistrate had pity, sorrow, and patience in his soul, it was Abraham Lincoln. If ever a woman's heart beat in a President's breast, it was in the breast of Abraham Lincoln. The very man in whom centered the national authority, was the most merciful man the nation held. It could not have been the individual man alone, but the Government he represented, and the principles, as its head, he maintained, that aroused the murderous passion in the assassin's heart. Could the Confederacy, by one fiendish agent, at a single blow, have laid low in death every loyal man, as it did this unsuspecting victim, its vile satisfaction would only have been the more complete.

The slain President was a representative man. So was the stealthy murderer. The one represented our cause,—true, honest, unsuspecting, merciful. The

other represented the cause of secession,—deceptive, artful, cowardly, cruel. And, for all time, these two individuals will stand as the personal embodiments of the opposing elements of this war.

Such an enemy must not only be conquered, but completely subdued. The leaders of such a cause—men educated and honored by the common country—men well acquainted with the genius of our Government—men turning traitorous as Arnold or Burr, and so talented and circumstanced as to be a thousand times more dangerous, are unfit to breathe the air! Their banished life, even to the remotest island of the sea, would so degrade the heathen hearts around them, as to bring everlasting disgrace upon the land that gave them birth.

Shall we count as naught our nation's treasure, our brothers' blood, and our President's life? Are we willing that a single seed of secession shall be left to grow, and blight, and curse us again by its rankling poison? Shall we receive to our embrace unrepenting traitors, permit them to re-assemble in our national counsels, and again incite a strife which shall crush our children's hearts, and re-redden the land of Washington and Lincoln with a current of young crimson more precious than our own? These questions are pressed upon us by the solemnities of the hour. In God's name let us take courage to answer them as men and Christians. Let us answer them as though we were called to stand as brothers abreast, and with heart-beat and quick step, to march into the conspiracies

of Satan in the strength of Jesus our great Leader! True loyalty builds no new platforms, and fixes itself to no political parties. Party or no party, recognized or ignored, its spirit is to save and strengthen the Republic, to root out and annihilate the last vestige of treason.

The appalling drama passing before our eyes, must bring every true man to the altar of prayer. And when men pray, they dare not mingle one solitary thought of compromise with wrong with their petitions. We may talk to our fellow-men, and advise the continuance of an acknowledged evil, for peace' sake; but we had better never talk with God so! We must approach him with pure motives only, and humbly. Let all who cherish the life of this Republic more than the lives of its vanquished destroyers, be sure that no prejudice remains in their hearts. And may the Lord lead us on in duty, and help us in these times of trial and trouble! May we be patient to await the legitimate correctives and penalties of law! We can afford to wait. Let every man be firm as a rock for the truth, trusting in God.

And now the mourning thousands gathered together lamenting our national loss, are separating and returning to their homes. We all have learned to love our country more, and more to love order, liberty, law, God, and each other. The hour of peace shall not delay. Our President is crowned to-day with immortality. He communes with Washington. How clear their vision now, down-looking from their shin-

ing seats! The two great souls have met in heaven. They went up through tribulation; but their robes are washed, and glory to the Lamb! They met their country's foes in battle array, saw them vanquished, then faced the last enemy, and again have conquered through Him who loved them. Here in this vale of tears they struggled, and sorrowed, and wept, more for others than themselves; but now the days of their mourning are ended, their tears are turned into joy—into FULLNESS of joy and pleasures for ever more.

* * * * * *

Yet how difficult to realize the fact that Abraham Lincoln is dead!—that his ear is deaf to human applause and battle alarm,—that his eye is sealed to streaming banners and mangled men,—that his hand shall greet a foreign prince or weary freedman never any more! He molders like the beggar, in his shroud. That delivering arm is palsied; that honest heart is still; that cheering voice, which moved armies, and agitated the continent, and gladdened the war-weary soldier, is for ever silent.

When we remember the sacrifice of SUCH an offering upon our country's altar—how, by a studied and malicious plot, dark as the blackness of midnight in hell, the agent of secession smote our President—we can not entertain a thought of re-fellowship with the instigators or apologists of the crime. And

"Whoso shrinks or falters now,
Whoso to the yoke would bow,
Brand the craven on his brow.

Freedom's soil has only place
For a free and fearless race,
None for traitors false and base."

I remember how forcefully the nation's heart was impressed on the 4th of March, by the sublime language of the President's inaugural. To-day those words are an inspiration. In the solemn hour of his second oath he said: "The Almighty has his own purposes. Woe unto the world, because of its offenses, for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe unto the man by whom the offense cometh. If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of these offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense comes, shall we discern that there is any departure from those Divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away; yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondmen's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous; although, with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the

right, LET US STRIVE TO FINISH THE WORK. We are to bind up the nation's wounds, and care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and for his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

To these noble sentiments all the people bow, in tears, to-day, saying, AMEN. Another widow and other orphans, the best beloved of him who uttered these tender sympathies, are added to the innumerable throng of disconsolate mourners. May all the broken-hearted be blest and guided by the Lord! May our sorrowing country be comforted by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and may our new President be supported by the Omnipotent in these terrible trial-hours, and so live and rule in righteousness, as to win his way to the hearts of the people!

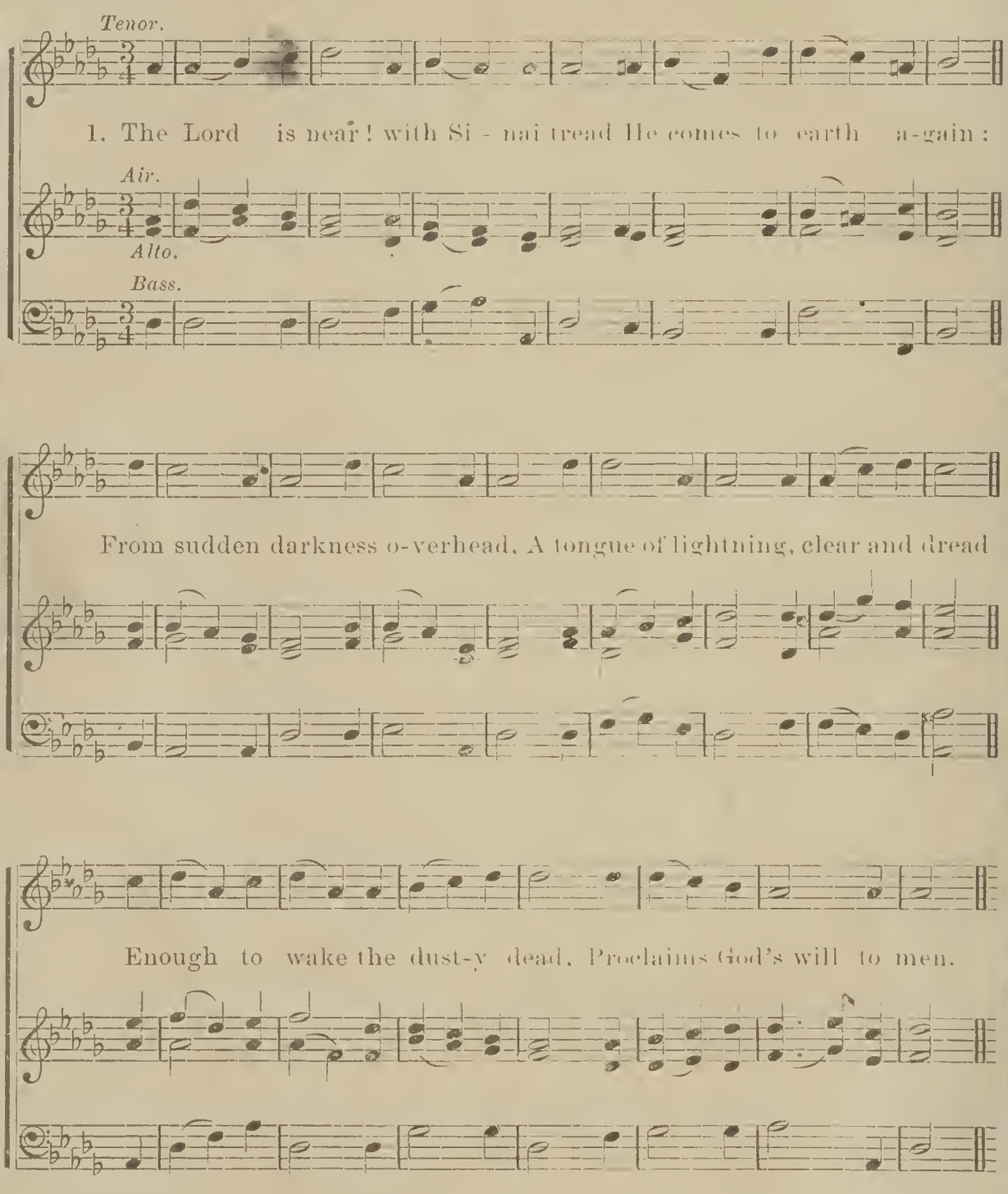
And now the loving lesson of our Father, in this chastisement, is clearly seen, and loudly spoken. He demands that we shall transmit, undimmed of one single glory, our hallowed institutions to an hundred generations yet to come; that the dear old flag of our fathers shall be the banner waving over the liberties of our children for ever. And any confederated or foreign power that aims to sunder a Union restored by our President's faith, and sealed by his blood, might as wisely aim to sever the mighty bond that unites the solar system, and blow with its foul breath, those glorious stars away, that march and sing in God's great law of gravitation, round the beaming blaze of the sun!

NATIONAL AFFLICTION.

A HYMN.

DEDICATED TO UNION CHAPEL CHOIR.

WORDS BY ALEXANDER CLARK. MUSIC BY HUBERT P. MAIN.


Tenor.
1. The Lord is near! with Si - nai tread He comes to earth a-gain:
Air.
Alto.
Bass.
From sudden darkness o-verhead, A tongue of lightning, clear and dread
Enough to wake the dust-y dead, Proclaims God's will to men.

II.

O, bleeding country! now arise,
And call upon the Lord;
Thy broken heart and tearful eyes
Win pity on thee from the skies
Thro' Christ, the world's slain Sacrifice,
Who saves thee by His Word.

III.

Thou God of nations! hear our prayer:
We lift our hearts to Thee;
Our sinful nation's life, O, spare!
And may our grief Thy grace declare
By every Christly cross we bear
To bless and make men free!

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